

THE LAW COURTS IN THE CITY.—From a report made to the Court of Common Council, by the City Lands Committee, it appears that Mr. Tite has been chosen to prepare plans and designs for the City Law Courts. This gentleman and the City Surveyor have presented a report to the Committee, of which the following is the substance:—"In proceeding to study the general arrangements, the committee is aware that we give great attention to the question of the possibility of placing any or all of the courts on the ground-floor; and in order to determine this most important question, we laid before the committee, at their meeting on the 14th of September, a series of plans, in which the attempt was made to place the Courts of Queen's Bench and Common Pleas on the ground-floor, and the Court of Exchequer on the one-pair floor. After due and careful examination, the committee were unanimously of opinion, that unless all the courts were placed on the one-pair floor, sufficient accommodation would not be obtained for the public, the counsel, the solicitors, and the witnesses. To this opinion we entirely acquiesce. On the ground-floor, we propose that the great entrance in Guildhall-yard shall be mainly, if not entirely, used by the juries, witnesses, solicitors, and the public; that the entrance for the judges shall be from a door-way towards the east end in Guildhall-buildings, and that the counsel shall enter on the east side. In the public entrance we have thought it right to make the hall, staircase, and vestibule, as open, light, and ample as possible. The rooms for witnesses, solicitors, or consultations, are seven in number, according to the plans, and their area is feet superficial is 2,828, exclusive of the halls, staircases, vestibule, and robing-room. We have prepared two elevations, one of the west front in Guildhall-yard, another of that to the south in Guildhall-buildings, together with a perspective view, which shows the general effect of the whole. In the interior of the building we have carried out the style adopted on the outside. The courts would have level ceilings, executed in imitation of the old carved and timbered ceilings of the Tudor period. By a reference to the plans, the committee will see that this design involves the re-construction of nearly all the present building. The foundations would, of course, be used to a great extent. The internal walls of the courts, and perhaps the back or eastern wall, it would be unnecessary to disturb; but every thing at the back of the courts must be entirely reconstructed, and the two external front walls rebuilt. We have made sufficient general calculations to enable us to advise the committee that the works could be carried into effect, at an expense not exceeding 10,000l." As it is intended to remove the Court of Bankruptcy, and an additional space may then be obtained, the question stands over for consideration, as the difficulty of erecting the three courts on the same floor, and other inconveniences, might then be altogether obviated.—*From the "Architect, Engineer, and Surveyor."*

DOYNE.—It is contemplated to erect two churches at this place. The sum of 800l. is already subscribed for the purpose.

ROYAL INSTITUTION.—April 7.—Professor Faraday on Light and Ventilation.—The theatre was so crowded that many persons could not gain admission. The subject was interesting, not from any novel theory, but for the application of known facts to useful purposes, especially lighting and ventilating,—ventilation being here used in its common acceptance, as meaning only the mode of withdrawing, from places where human beings are to live, the bad air consequent on combustion, and so leaving the atmosphere in its natural condition, in which alone it can be beneficial to man. After some general remarks on the nature of combustion, the consequent formation of water and carbonic acid, Mr. Faraday described the new process for which his brother has taken out a patent, and exhibited a chandelier to which it had been applied. The ordinary glass chimney is first placed on the lamp, which is fed with external air, as usual: a second chimney, somewhat larger and taller, is then put on, and covered with a thin sheet of mica. In the space between the glasses there is no communication with the external air, except through what Mr. Faraday called an aerial sewer, which sewer is intended to carry off the heated and decomposed air, and is continued till the air is discharged outside the house, or into the fire of a chimney. In brief, the invention consists in the application of the down-drawing stove principle to a lamp burner. This arrangement, in the chandelier exhibited, formed a part of the central support, and was ornamental as well as useful.

CITY WALL.—A part of the ancient Roman boundary of London is about to be demolished to make a site for a new church; this is a bad example, the church demands veneration for its own antiquity, and justly so, but with what face when it despoils the antiquity equally venerable with its own?

SOCIETY OF ARTS.—April 12.—W. Tooke, Esq. V.P. in the chair.—Mr. Davis described his patent Stereoprism combination, as applicable to wood pavements, and for other purposes. This combination has already been applied in paving part of the carriage-way in Lombard-street. The mode of forming the paving blocks is by cutting a piece of timber 6 inches thick and 3½ inches wide, into lengths of 9 inches, the angles at which the blocks are cut being 36°. In each side, and in the sloped ends, a rectangular groove is cut three-fourths of an inch in width, and of similar depth, the bottom of the groove being 2 inches from the bottom of the block: into these grooves are inserted wooden keys 3½ inches in length, three-fourths of an inch thick, and 1½ inch in width, the use of which is to tie the blocks together, both longitudinally and laterally. A triangular groove, three-fourths of an inch wide, and five-sixteenths of an inch deep, is cut in the upper surface, in the direction of its length—and each row is put together so as to break joint throughout the work.

PROPOSED COMMISSION TO INQUIRE INTO THE STATE OF THE METROPOLITAN SEWERS.—Sir James Graham has stated in the House that government is about to empower immediately a commission to inquire into the state of the metropolitan sewerage. The value of this inquiry will entirely depend upon the qualifications and honesty of the persons selected for this important duty. It is a subject in which we feel the deepest interest, and we shall not hesitate to express our opinions freely upon any objections which can be fairly raised against the persons to whom the investigation is delegated. To the appointment of military men, whatever may be their qualifications, we entirely object, for reasons we have elsewhere stated. As there can be no doubt that there are many eminent engineers, surveyors, and other practical men who are thoroughly acquainted with the subject, and as the subject of inquiry is unconnected with the duties of the military office, there can be no excuse for depriving the professions of the emolument or honour to be derived from such an investigation.—*Architect, Engineer, and Surveyor.*

The beautiful new church at Turnham Green, built by Messrs. Scott and Moffat, will be consecrated almost immediately. It is one of the very best specimens of modern church architecture. We are glad to learn that the splendid church at Camberwell, which is in course of erection by these able architects, is progressing very satisfactorily. Messrs. Scott and Moffat are also the architects of the new church about to be erected at Halsted, Essex.

The alterations in St. Thomas's Church progress—one of the four lofty Saxon arches, the only one remaining, which formerly supported the square tower, has been uncovered. It will be a work of labour to restore the tracery and ribbing which adorned it, as at present nothing but the plain stone outlines remain, and all the ornamental parts were swept away in 1698. The monuments at the eastern end have been removed, and a Saxon arch with deep-set window, in excellent preservation, discovered. Through this window, during the troubles of the glorious Reformation, the officiating priest was shot at by a monomaniac Lollard. As the object seems to be restoration, we hope the passages leading between the walls will be opened again. They were closed to prevent a draft, but without any effect, while the echo of the building was thereby destroyed. We have no doubt these being removed will improve the vibration of the building, as probably the passages extend all round the chancel, and the entrance to them is in the turret in the southern transept, which contains a circular stone staircase, with two narrow passages at the summit closed by brickwork. A large circular-headed recess is also apparent in the northern transept, but whether it contains a window or was one of the ancient shrines is as yet unknown. We are inclined to think it contained the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket, for the lighting of which a legacy, secured on some houses in the town, was annually bequeathed; or it possibly might have contained the effigy of some ancient personage. If the large Saxon arch be restored to match the two smaller side ones, the incongruous Corinthian cornice above it must be removed, by which a much greater appearance of elevation will be obtained.

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.—Important alterations are to be made in some of the colleges in this university. Baliol is to undergo thorough repair, the direction of which was intrusted to Mr. Pugin, the celebrated Catholic architect. The master of the college objected to the employment of this gentleman, and Mr. Pugin's engagement is, consequently, broken off. St. John's and All Souls Colleges will also receive decorations during the course of the summer; and some new buildings are to be added to University College. The dirt, which has been accumulating for many years, covers many beautiful specimens of art in the respective colleges, the existence of which is scarcely known.

RESTORATION.—On the Continent, from Cologne downwards, the work of restoration has begun; and England was even beforehand in setting an example. Canterbury, York, Hereford, Wells, Norwich, Salisbury, Lichfield, Chichester, and Chester, are already undergoing, or about to undergo, extensive repairs; besides Westminster, Beverley, St. Mary Redcliffe, and others of our Minsters; and parish churches without number. With all this, the general taste must be rapidly improving, and a false step made now will before long be obvious to all; and besides having (if possible) to be undone, will render any who have been concerned in taking it unamenable to the just indignation of posterity.—*Ecclesiologist.*

The little chapel proposed to be erected at Westport, Somersetshire, is an unaffected design, and has much of the genuine character of our ancient village churches. The plan contains a chancel, nave, and low square western tower. The whole cost of the erection will not exceed 800l. We could have wished to see a small southern porch, which is an almost indispensable feature, and would add very greatly to its appearance at a very small increase of cost. The walls seem somewhat too high for the proportion of the roof. We are not informed who is the architect.—*Ibid.*

The church of Wooburn, Bucks, before the last repair, possessed a carved wooden roof, north and south porches, an ancient font, and two lychgates. The church was then ceiled, the font ejected for a hideous modern basin, the porches destroyed, and the doors stopped up (so that now the usual entrance is by the priest's door), and the lychgates employed to build a pigsty: what became of the font we know not.—*Ibid.*

The font at St. George's, Hanover-square, is unique in form and situation. It resembles a tolerably-sized marble wine-cooler, fixed in a circular carved oak frame about a foot high. The whole machine runs upon castors, and is wheeled out when wanted from under the communion-table!—*Ibid.*

The ancient and greatly admired font at Wellow Church, Somerset, has been recently restored, at the cost of the Vicar, the Rev. C. Paul, as a preliminary step to the renovation, by public subscription, of the entire interior of the church. This church is a handsome building, consisting of a chancel, a nave with aisle, and a tower at the west. It was built about 1372, at the sole expense of Sir Walter Hungerford, and is dedicated to St. Julian.—*Archæological Magazine.*

Sir John Smyth, Bart., of Ashton Court, who is the lay impropriator of the parish of Stapleton, has given 1,000l. towards the endowment, and 350l. towards the erection of a parsonage house in that parish.—*Ibid.*

The late Edward Davies, Esq., who at the time of his decease was registrar for the diocese of Salisbury, has bequeathed 500l. to the fund for keeping the cathedral of that city in repair.—*Ibid.*

The Bishop of Salisbury has undertaken to restore, at his own expense, the beautiful chapter-house of his cathedral; the cost will not be less than 2,000l.—*Ibid.*

—A correspondent at Oxford thus writes to us—"We are full of restorations and rumours of restorations. A total repair and almost rebuilding of Baliol College is in contemplation, and Mr. Pugin was invited to execute it, but it has been thought inexpedient to employ a Roman Catholic, and especially a violent partizan, and the Master of Baliol has withdrawn his consent. The Puseyites were exulting in the prospect of Pugin's employment, as a 'great theological step.' St. John's College Chapel is to be fully restored this summer, and the Fellows have selected Mr. Blom as the architect. A very ugly plaster roof is to be removed, and one of oak, which has been plastered over, restored to sight. The altar screen and window are also to be removed and replaced by stained glass, and the whole of the wood-work to be altered more in conformity with the style of the building. The chapel is much older than the time of the foundation of the college, having belonged to a Bernardine convent, on the site of which the college was built. The old and by no means ornamental library has given way to a very elegant new one, and the hall and the front of the college will in their turns be restored and beautified. The martyrs' memorial is completed with the exception of the inscription, and is very elegant. It is universally admired. Mr. Cokerell's building of the Taylor College is near its completion, and the models, &c., of Sir F. Chantrey, presented by his widow, are already deposited. All Souls' College is also being restored by degrees; and a pretty little building has just been added to University College, and forms an additional ornament to the High Street. I thought these details might form a scrap in your 'weekly gossip.'—*Illustration.*